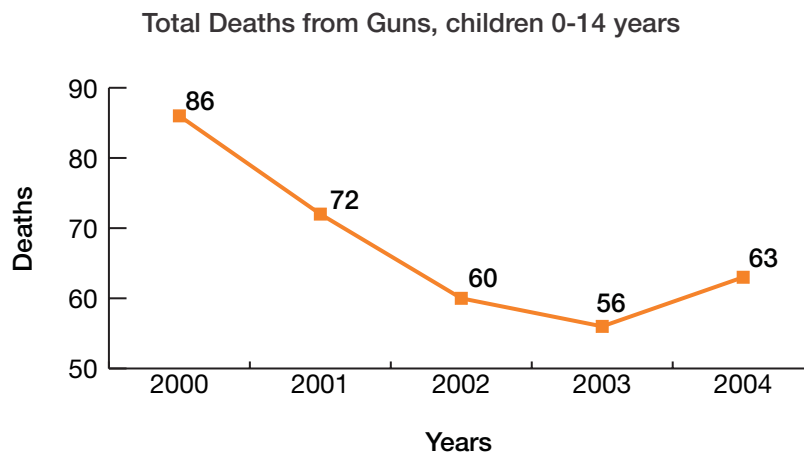


# Gun Safety



## Key Facts

- Each year, 67 children ages 14 years and under die from an unintentional gun shooting.



- Annually, approximately 880 children are treated in the emergency room for injuries due to accidental shootings from handguns, shotguns and rifles.
- In 2005, there were more than 7,000 non-fatal injuries to children involving BB guns and pellet guns.
- Unintentional shootings account for nearly 20 percent of all firearm-related fatalities among children ages 14 years and under.
- Approximately one-third of families with children (representing more than 22 million children) keep at least one gun in the home.

## Where, When, and How

- Nearly all childhood unintentional shooting deaths occur in or near the home.
- Most childhood unintentional shooting deaths involve guns that have been kept loaded and accessible to children and occur when children play with loaded guns.
- An estimated 3.3 million children in the United States live in homes with guns that are either always or sometimes kept loaded and unlocked.
- Unintentional shootings among children occur most often when children are unsupervised and out of school. Accidental shootings occur more often in the late afternoon, peaking between 4 - 5 p.m. during the weekend
- Unintentional firearm injuries to children occur most frequently between June and August and during the holiday season (November to December).
- More than 70 percent of unintentional firearm shootings involve handguns.
- Rural areas have higher rates of firearm ownership and unintentional firearm-related deaths and injuries than urban and suburban areas.
- Shootings in rural areas are more likely to occur outdoors with a shotgun or rifle; shootings in urban areas are more likely to occur indoors and with a handgun.

## **Who**

- A study showed that half of male boys ages 8 – 12 years who found a real handgun were unsure whether it was a toy.
- Children living in the South have an unintentional shooting death rate that is four times that of children living in the Northeast.
- Children as young as age 3 years are strong enough to pull the trigger of many of the handguns sold in the United States.

## **Proven Interventions**

- Two safety devices, gun locks and load indicators, could prevent more than 30 percent of all unintentional firearm deaths.
- Gun design changes can prevent unintentional firearm death and injury in children; every unintentional shooting by a child under age 5 years who either killed itself or another could have been prevented with the installation of a safety device.

## **Costs**

- Hospital treatment costs, on average, \$28,000 per child for a firearm-related injury.
- A study of all direct and indirect costs of gun violence including medical, lost wages, and security costs estimates that gun violence costs the nation \$100 billion a year.

## **Laws and Regulations**

- In October 1997, Massachusetts became the first state to issue consumer product safety regulations for all handguns made or sold in the state. California and New York have passed similar regulations.
- Nineteen states have enacted child access prevention (CAP) laws, which may hold adults criminally liable for failure to either store loaded firearms in a place inaccessible to children or to use safety devices to lock guns.
- State safe-storage laws intended to prevent child access to guns have reduced unintentional firearm-related deaths among children ages 14 years and under an average of 23 percent.
- Nine states and several local jurisdictions have passed laws or ordinances requiring a gun lock to be sold with every handgun.